

OUR MID-WINTER MEETINGS

If the weather we have experienced in Toronto and vicinity during January is any indication, we may be in for a rough time this winter. Accordingly, the possibility exists that meetings may have to be cancelled if conditions are too severe. How to tell if a meeting may not be held? If conditions are bad enough that transportation may be a problem, you may phone either Gordon Turner at (416) 762-3130 or the Editor at (416) 921-8436 for information.

But please remember that we are not weather forecasters. It would be appreciated if calls could be made ONLY on the Saturday morning, the day of the meeting. Thank you.

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"SCANNER" PHOTOPAGES

For almost the entire thirty-one years that we have been publishing the "Scanner", our photopages have been produced for us by Bas Headford, of Minnett Printing and Photographic. Bas has handled the lay-out of the pages, the reproduction of the original photos (which come in all sizes, shapes and degrees of quality), and the actual printing of the photopages. We have been extremely fortunate to have Bas do this work for us, and the results have spoken for themselves.

But now, Bas has decided that it is time to retire from the printing business, and so for the very first time, the photopage in this issue has been produced by Pronto Reproductions, which has for many years printed the non-photo pages of "Scanner" for us. We hope that our readers will approve of the result.

We wish to extend our most sincere thanks to Bas Headford for the work he has done for us. Bas will be pursuing his interests as a railfan in his retirement, as well as continuing his production of commemorative ceramic plates. We wish Bas and June all the very best for the years ahead.

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MARINE NEWS

It was announced on January 14th that the Algoma Central Corporation has acquired all of the shares of EnerChem Transport Inc., as well as 25 per cent (the maximum allowed by law for a foreign corporation) of Cleveland Tankers (1991) Inc. The acquisitions make Algoma the largest operator of tankers on the Great Lakes, and provide a significant addition to Algoma's existing fleet of tankers, self-unloaders and straight-deck bulk carriers. The EnerChem fleet, which at one time was much larger, at present comprises three tankers: ENERCHEM REFINER, ENERCHEM TRADER and ENERCHEM CATALYST, while the Cleveland Tankers fleet operates SATURN and GEMINI. It was only during the early months of 1998 that Algoma acquired the five-tanker fleet of Imperial Oil Limited, and created Algoma Tankers Ltd., of Halifax, to operate them. The purchase price of the EnerChem/Cleveland Tankers operations reportedly carried a price tag of \$19.5 million. Details of how the operation of the five newly-acquired tankers will be integrated with existing Algoma Central services have not yet been announced.

"The Waterways Journal" issue of January 4th carried a report to the effect that Great Lakes Marine Leasing LLC has let to Halter Marine Group Inc., of Gulfport, Mississippi, a contract for the construction of a 740-foot, self-unloading, dry bulk cargo barge, of 38,200 dwt., for lake service. The barge, which will be the first large laker built for a U.S. fleet in 19 years, has been designed by Bay Engineering Inc., of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. The barge will be built in two sections by Halter's subsidiary, Gulf Coast Fabrication Inc., at Pearlinton, Mississippi, and the sections then will be towed to New Orleans, where they will be joined in drydock by Halter Gulf Repair. To be named GREAT LAKES TRADER, the barge will be operated by